



For Immediate Release
May 2, 2006

Contact: Tad Furtado
Office: 202-225-5206

BASS / BARTON BILL WOULD SPEED INCREASED FUEL SUPPLIES Biofuel and Gasoline Refinery Permits to be Better Coordinated

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Charles Bass (R-NH02) today introduced the Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act (H.R. 5254), which would create a federally coordinated scheduling process for the siting, permitting, and approval of application for the construction of a gasoline or biofuel refinery.

“This legislation would coordinate a badly disjointed process for seeking approval to build new biofuel, gasoline, or diesel refineries in the United States,” said Bass. “We should assist local, state, and federal officials in confronting the confusing and sometime contradictory regulations, approval timelines, and permits required by dozens of regulatory agencies. Managing the process collaboratively would also result in greater public transparency and adherence to the critical environmental reviews and assessments that are required.”

Total capacity at operating U.S. refineries is roughly 17 million barrels per day, while total U.S. demand averages nearly 21 million barrels per day. This growing shortfall has been met by an increase in imported refined products from foreign sources and has caused prices to rise accordingly. The Bass legislation would appoint a federal coordinator when an application has been filed to construct a refinery who would be responsible for organizing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) between all local, state, and federal agencies involved in issuing permits and the approvals needed for that proposed project. Financial and technical assistance would be available to the states to help them gather the appropriate data and comply with all the needed requirements for a federal refinery authorization.

The legislation also would establish a list of Presidentially designated sites on closed military bases that could serve as a suitable location for a new refinery. At least one such site must specifically be designated as a potential biorefinery.

“Any American who has ever remodeled part of their home understands that using a general contractor or someone to organize a schedule and keep a project on time helps avoid delays and cost runups,” added Bass. “Our motor fuel supplies continue to be too tight to meet the demand of America and we need to address the situation comprehensively by increasing domestic production, supporting the transition to renewable biofuels, and promoting greater conservation.”